/117 cont./

342 761 783 [756] Anyone may build himself a house of whatever size he wishes on his own land in the mountains, as well as on the above-mentioned community land in the valley, but he must first ask the shaman acting for him whether any bones of the Pijao are in the ground on the piece of land in mind. As comes out in the [773] [628] myths, the Pijao in ancient times were the frightful and militarily cleverer enemies of the Paez. Their bones (eč ndyít Pijao) contain "pest." This pest is a very complex and significant concept 961 783 123 among the Paez (cf. under "Religion" /see p. 191/), and the pest of the Pijao bones is capable of killing the people living above them. How very much our interpreter Victoriano, one of the most enlightened Paez, was affected by this fear came out when he worked with us in the archeological park in San Andrés. For lack of space he had to sleep in the tool room, where, however, he felt very comfortable and, with a camp bed and mattress, had built himself probably the best bed of his life. One day we opened a large prehistoric grave-chamber, which contained more than 80 bone-urns with the remains of cremations. Since we could not accommodate such a large number of urns in our living room, which at the same time served as our museum, we had to put a number of them in the tool room. I left the skeletal remains in several of them in order to save them for a later examination. Weeping, Victoriano begged me please not to put in his tool room any urns containing bones, because the bones might have come from the Pijao, who would surely kill him. Even the washed and cleaned urns, he assured us, contained very much "pest," so that at the next opportunity he wanted to go to Calderas and have himself "purified" by his home shaman. He failed to do this, and when after a few days he had a toothache, he traced this back to the action of the pest from the burial urns previously filled with bones.

342 761 783 756 787 /118/ The shaman's testing of the ground proposed as the building site is not done by digging or sampling the ground; rather, the one who wishes to build goes to the house of the shaman in the evening with coca, tobacco, and brandy, tells him of his wish, and then both sit down on the ground next to each other

/146 cont./

726 [726] [177] [411] In order to defend their mountain country the Paez also used large rocks which they hurled down on the attackers from the heights. They, too, however, soon succeeded in obtaining iron and iron weapons. In their battles at the time of the Conquista they were already using swords and machetes.

411 726 773 628 411 171 The stone-sling plaited of agave fibers, whose manufacture is described below (see under "Plaiting" /see pp. 85-86 /), is of great importance mythologically in the battles with the "Pijao." For geographical reasons it is the typical weapon of the American mountain peoples from Tierra del Fuego to Canada, whereas the blowgun, for similar reasons, is the typical weapon chiefly of the Amazonas and Orinoco forest area. The simultaneous occurrence of blowgun and sling is found all the way from Mexico to Ecuador and in Bolivia (Friederici, 1911, pp. 71-73, Pl. 13).

411 [462] [857] [223] /147/ The blowgun of the Paez consists of a single barrel and is very simple in its construction. It is made only by men, but for bird-hunting is used almost solely by boys. To make it, one uses the thin, straight trunk of the fíza tree, the pith of which is burned out with a long iron tube about eight millimeters in diameter and heated red-hot. The length of the tube is two to three meters. No special mouthpiece is attached. As a sight a little piece of beeswax is pasted above the mouth of the blowgun. [824] The ball-shaped fruits of the smbák tree, which have exactly the right caliber when green, are used as shot. The range amounts [211] to about 20 meters. The accuracy of the shot is not great. Nevertheless, there are boys who have carved more than 20 notches above the blowhole of the tube as a record of the birds killed.

4. Crafts and Techniques

a) Treatment of Fibers

283 The fiber material used by the Paez for plaiting, weaving, nets, or ropes is primarily agave, cotton, or sheep wool. Agave and cotton are ancient American fiber plants whose homeland is probably Central America, while working with sheep wool has its tradition in the Peruvian Highlands, in working with llama or

1: Nachtigall--135 E-5 (1952-1953) 1955 SC15 Paez SC15

/201 cont./

461 28 Whereas the men for the most part plait straw hats when they have nothing else to do, the women are busy with spinning and making the coca bags or the fiber bags. But even at this they do not work steadily in the sense, say, that they complete first one bag, for example, or make all the preparations from the outset for weaving an article of clothing; rather, they always work a little at a time on each task. Thus, for example, first a little spinning is done, then wood is fetched, then a coca bag is worked on, and then perhaps a brief hour is spent at the loom in order to weave a few centimeters more on the carrying band of the fiber bags, if the fiber material is at hand. No preparations are made for this plaiting and weaving for a long period in advance, but rather one provides herself with wool, spins it, weaves a bit farther, and then drops the work again for a week or more. Nevertheless, the women do not have periods of out-and-out idleness, like the men.

461 574 156 [192] This doing-nothing is designated among the Paez with a word of Spanish origin pasnyándo (paseando). To be sure, one must not overdo the inactivity, that is, not "go for a walk" longer than about two weeks in succession, for otherwise one is called "alko" (dog), who runs from house to house, sniffs about everywhere, and gets his food from other people by begging. This is encouraged by the unwritten law of the Paez, to give food to a starving person, wherever it may be, until he is satisfied. This is taken very seriously, not only when adults are the petitioners, but also in the case of small children, in memory of an event in prehistoric times when Chauté /202/ turned a number of persons into stones because they had not given a begging child anything to eat out of their surplus (see the myths /see p. 224/). Hence if anyone enters a house "pasnyándo," he is given something to eat. Younger, unmarried people in particular take advantage of this and sometimes do not work at all, but go to a different house every day. They inquire as to where sugar cane is being milled, help there, are given chicha to drink and food to eat, and the next day go somewhere else. Thus there are some men who have neither house nor field, but nevertheless live quite well. To be sure, the

/267 cont./

756 like the entire culture of the Paez. For the rest, there are neither special articles of clothing or equipment nor any other kind of ceremonial gear, such as crystals, masks, or rattles.

[824] The shaman's staff consists of a smooth staff, 50 to 60 centimeters long, made out of the hard wood of the chonta palm. It is /268/ pointed at one end and semicircular in cross-section. Each shaman makes this staff for himself before treating his first [764] patient and never lets it out of his hand. When he dies, it is put into the grave with him. Before a séance begins, he sticks it into the ground, though not directly in front of him, but somewhat to the side. Only rarely does a shaman have it in his hand during the séance. As the single exception to the unadorned shaman's staff, I know of only the one belonging to old Felisa Ipia of Santa Rosa. On her staff she has tied a number of colored wool threads [774] which she spun herself and dyed with homemade dyes. She has collected in these threads the souls of all the villagers of Santa [755] Rosa. If someone in the village falls ill, she learns of it through [787] her signs or through Thunder personally and in this way is better able to help the sick person, since she can immediately blow her medicinal herbs, mixed with brandy, on the wool threads and thus can help the sick person better.

756 S. Bernal Villa points out that the designation for the shaman's ●773 staff corresponds to the name of the most important culture hero of the Paez, Juan Tama, who, according to tradition, was lawgiver, famous and victorious commander of the army, first chief [976] and shaman. According to other traditions, he was the son of the stars, the son of Thunder, or Thunder himself. The present-day shamans regard the staff as a gift from Thunder, and as a sign of spiritual alliance with him. A shaman of San Andrés, reporting on the origin of the shaman staff, says that, according to the stories of the elders, the tama was introduced by Thunder himself. According to this, a man once had his hut and his potato field in the mountains. He harvested the field with his son. One day the son refused to follow his father to the field, but rather preferred to stay behind in the hut. The next day the son had disappeared

/268 cont./

756 without leaving a trace. In vain the father tried to find out where
●773 he was staying. After eight days, however, the son again appeared in the hut. He said that he had been with his grandfather, who had given him brandy, medicines, and this staff that he held in his hand and that was called tama. The "brandy" was cold water from a lake, and the medicines in the fiber bag were mountain herbs. After he had said this, he fell into a trance and lay there as though dead. Fourteen days later, as he lay dying, he asked his father to hand him his tama, for Thunder had told him that he could defend himself with it and that, in case of illness, he should take the medicines that he had given him. He squeezed /269/ out the juice and drank it. Quickly he became well. When he gave it to other sick persons, they, too, became well immediately. With his staff and his medicines he became the best doctor far and wide. He died at an advanced age.

775 Another shaman said that the tama stems from a lifesaving
773 act of the Holy Virgin Mary. Once when the sea rose constantly
177 higher and had covered almost the entire earth, human beings were in great danger. The Virgin Mary took pity on them. She drew forth the tama and with it made the same motions that the shamans make with it today. The masses of water then receded. She left her staff behind for the person who became a shaman. This is supposed to be the origin of the tama.

Although in the latter story not only the figure of the Virgin Mary, but possibly also the motif of the Deluge did not originate in the thought of the Paez, nevertheless the origin of the tama as
756 a gift from a higher power is noteworthy. This power, which,
776 for the shamans, is of the greatest significance as a spirit being
787 and as the first shaman, is Thunder. According to reports, he also positively has the character of an assistant spirit, even though he is almost only feared by the present-day shamans. "The old shamans," the present ones constantly assert, "were still powerful enough magically to establish communication with Thunder directly and at any time; we today are no longer able
778 to do it." In former times the members of the cabildo, under the
756 guidance of a shaman, bathed together in the lagoon of Juan Tama
623

/269 cont./

and had their staff of office consecrated there. Today this no longer takes place because of the lack of good shamans. The shamans of today no longer have the intense visions that the earlier ones had, and that is why they are no longer so powerful magically. They are no longer able to speak with Thunder as simply as their predecessors did, and since they are weaker, it is believed that Thunder will kill them.

Thunder is generally described as small of stature and dressed like a Paez man with hat and black ruana. It is reported that he does not wear trousers, but exposes his sexual parts. He has with him, like a shaman, his tama, a fiber bag with medicines, and a musical instrument called "tíngalo" (triangle). It is not impossible that it is his picture, together with a Christian cross, that is incised in the gable post of a hut in the vicinity of the park of San Andrés, which represents a man with large, triangular-shaped sexual parts (Ill. 200 /see p. 288 /).

/270/ Thunder is regarded by all the Paez as the greatest shaman and by the teyu as their master. In the folklore (see below /see pp. 215 ff./), he probably often has different names, such as Juan Tama, Llivan, Chauté, Juan Chiracol, but his characteristics stand out in them, no matter whether as sät (cacique) he is fighting the Pijao and defending his people, or that he will one day -- people are convinced -- again drive the hated whites out of Tierradentro. He warns the Paez of an evil white person who is coming to Tierradentro for a visit by a clap of thunder from a clear sky. When he thunders above a particular house, he is announcing that there is "pest" in it, and if he thunders first above the house of a nyic and then above one belonging to a teyu he is thereby announcing to a good shaman that he has just been bewitched.

A few stories also tell about the struggles of the shamans against Thunder, for he once robbed the Paez of livestock and people. But that was long ago, for today no one would dare undertake anything against Thunder. The Calderun shamans tell how the earlier teyu were in a position to speak with Thunder at any time and to get advice from him. Those of today are no

/286 cont./
182 no new harvest may be undertaken until the teyu has first cleansed
756 of the pest the building site or the crops, respectively.

/287/ He is, however, not only the protector of the individual or the individual family, but is also responsible for the beneficial
• [773] co-existence of the members of the whole village. Thus, it is not surprising that it was the shamans -- besides Thunder under his various names -- who were the war leaders in the mythical tradi-
[726] tions. Thanks to their magical gifts and strength, they successfully led their people against the Pijao and the Spaniards. Several times the elders of the various villages told us that one day Thunder will again drive the white intruders out of the Tierradentro of the
[648] Paez and kill them. And it is only logical that, as late as 1952,
[789] on the occasion of an impending attack by an armed group of white revolutionaries, the shaman of Santa Rosa, as the successor of the mythical Thunder, should spit his magic herbs on the road leading to the village, in order to destroy them. Old Felisa Ipia is behaving in a similar manner when she keeps the souls of all the village inhabitants gathered together in the threads of her shaman's staff, in order to be able to protect them better against evil, magical influences.

756 On account of these certain supernatural abilities of theirs, the
554 effects of which no one in the community can evade, the teyu
[885] have a certain unofficial authority. In addition, they are all at least 30 to 40 years old and thus, by their very age, fulfill one of the natural prerequisites for recognition by the community. Not a few of them feel honored by this, set apart from the great mass of people, but many assured me that they were shamans only unwillingly, that though they were called by their ability to receive signs, they were nevertheless oppressed by the weight of the burden of their responsibility.

756 During times of epidemics of disease or inexplicable, "super-
124 natural" deaths, they are the focal point of the community, to
[182] which no one appeals in vain. And in conversations with them we generally had the distinct impression of facing unselfish, helpful human beings. They make no secret of their activity, and they tried, as best they could, to tell us about their experiences and knowledge which they use for the good of the community.

/314 cont./

105 241 [442] with sowing and harvesting otherwise characteristic of peoples who plant. It is not improbable that they practiced this field cultivation as they describe it for the Pijao. In the story /315/ of the Paez with the ax (No. 16) it is said that the Pijao were not familiar with tools in former times and, accordingly, could not fell trees to lay out a proper burned-off field. In order to obtain fields for their sowing, they were obliged to split the bark of trees with stones. After these were dried, they sowed their maize between the dead trunks.

105 [224] In connection with hunting, economically insignificant today, the hunter is surrounded by a number of prohibitions such as we find everywhere among hunting peoples throughout the world.

[226] Fishing is carried on with poisonous plants at weirs. It took place as a joint fishing expedition of the entire village in the February dry season when the water was at its lowest level of the year. This large annual fishing expedition was called enzte. The time

[233] [556] [23] period of one year was also designated with the same word. Raising large livestock is almost purely a sport or a matter of appearance and wealth. Horses are not used; cattle are slaughtered only for the three large annual Christian festivals (Semana Santa, San Juán, Immaculada).

Among weapons, only the shotgun for hunting is of significance

● [773] [441] today. The pellet blowgun and the stone-sling are used as toys. In the mythology the latter plays an important part as a decisive weapon in war.

In the handcraft techniques of plaiting and weaving, the use of agave fiber and sheep wool predominates, generally in the form of spun and twisted threads. The carrying bags of agave fiber and the wool coca bags are made by the loop technique; the hammocks, bird nets, berry sieves, and stone-slings by the knot technique. Only straw hats are plaited. The bands of the fiber bags are woven out of agave fibers; the women's belts and the articles of clothing of men and women, out of sheep wool. The weaving method is simple rod-weaving with the linen texture. The women's belts have an ornamental warp formed during the weaving process. The weaving frame is vertical, of the so-called

/316 cont./

105 The kinship nomenclature shows remnants of a "classificatory"
601 system, into which the individual is fitted as part of a living structure and does not stand out in profile, detached within the family. Persons are differentiated in address according to certain circumstances of age and life, and, among others, siblings are differentiated in address, according to whether they are younger or older than the speaker.

105 In art and mythology a considerable impoverishment has
53 taken place. There is neither song nor any peculiar dance. The music of transverse flutes and drums, performed with great enthu-
[177] siasm, is to be stressed. The cylindrical drum with skin stretched on two sides, which is used at the present time by the Paez, is in all parts of America a loan from the Negroes. In earlier times hanging, hollowed-out tree-trunks were used for the dance and for conveying information, such as /317/ are used today as troughs for making chicha. The rattles formerly present are no longer used today. The transverse flutes with six blowholes used by the Paez are post-Columbian; at any rate they are not found in this form either archeologically or recently among uninfluenced Indians. The only transverse flute form known from pre-Spanish and modern times are flutes that are stopped at both ends and provided with two blowholes (Izikowitz, pp. 298 ff.).

105 In the fund of tales no comprehensive picture of the world
● 773 emerges. The chief figure in the myths is Thunder, who appears
776 as the first shaman and as a war leader. He is not, however, an exalted, numinous figure, but rather to some extent has characteristics attributed to forest spirits in other parts of South America.
[784] There is also a special forest spirit (gĕlyómp) among the Paez. He
[224] has the figure of an old man with large, exposed sexual parts, and his stings inflicted as punishment for ritual uncleanness in connection with hunting cause the human being sickness and pain. He does not, however, appear mythologically. Fragments of larger myth-complexes are the story of the woman from whose body useful plants arise, the story about the ghostly human head that comes rolling along, stories about transformed animals and human beings, and stories about werejaguars.

[Parcialidad of Calderas]

/289 cont./

142 The Calderuno /native of Calderas/ is rather tall, with a light copper skin, straight black hair, a straight nose somewhat flattened and broad at the base, slightly prominent cheekbones, dark brown eyes reminiscent of the Mongolian eye, a broad forehead, long and robust extremities, a slightly pentagonal face; many have mustaches, and, on the whole, the 157 features are rather /290/ handsome. On the other hand, he is talkative, communicative, deeply traditionalistic, proud [36] of himself, and has a deep love of the land. Isolated as they [177] are from the other parcialidades by natural accidents and far removed from the urban centers of Inzá and Belalcázar, they are shy, sullen, and withdrawn with the white, stubbornly opposed to contact with him, and, as a result their institutions, have suffered less from the impact of cultural mestization. 797 Not even the very church that has worked so persistently for the 177 catechization of these tribes, especially in this century through the Lazarist missionaries active since 1905, has been able to penetrate fully into the soul of these people.

114 I have carried out my research in this parcialidad since ● 773 the month of August of last year, with several interruptions. [124] The myths and tales which I now present were gathered with patient labor after much waiting, for the natives, when questioned about these themes, nearly always reply with the word himeto ("I don't know"). There is no need to stress the importance of mythology as an institution in the so-called "primitive" cultures. Nor is it my intention to theorize on the subject. It is enough to say, in the words of Herskovits, that "mitología es como la carta constitucional de las creencias y presta sentido a la conducta ritual que se deriva de sus consagraciones /mythology is the constitutional charter of beliefs and gives meaning to the ritualistic behavior that is derived from its consecrations/" (1). The chroniclers tell

1. Herskovits, p. 409 /see the bibliography in the foreign text, p. 309/.

/290/

114 us nothing about the religion and mythology of the Paez. Nor
773 do systematic modern studies exist. Nor do those who have had the opportunity to be in contact with them and to describe their customs and ways of life tell us about their religion and mythology. Furthermore, there are those who state that the Paez have no mythology. José Pérez de Barradas collected the myth of Juan Tama. Gregorio Hernández de Alba refers to it, and the Lazarist missionary Fr. David González also collected it and has it in his unpublished work, Los Paeces /The Paez/, in quite elaborate and synthetical form, as does G. Burg. It is obvious that a large part of the myths and tales which I am presenting, not to say all of them, have suffered modifications in the avatar of time, as the institutions also changed. Since mythology is the rationalization of conflicts created by the culture itself, it is subject to the directives /291/ of that society and culture. Its roots are inevitably of a sociological and cultural nature.

773 Many of the myths collected have a marked similarity to
776 that of Juan Tama. The predominant central motifs refer to
538 sex and aggression. The personages in the myths are Thunder, Llíban, Juan Chiracol, Chaute, and Santo Tomás. Llíban is regarded as Thunder's son, but everyone maintains that he is Thunder himself; he was a cacique, and the natives state that many of their caciques took refuge in the turbulent waters of the river. The last two personages merge and in reality form a single being. It is to be noted that in some accounts the tricky personage presented is not Tomás, who is a saint, but Pedro Dimales, his brother.

186 There is no need to emphasize the role played by the Pijao
793 in these accounts. The recollection of this people inured to
628 war is still fresh in the memory of the Calderunos, the characteristics of the struggle sustained against them still manifest, the fear that the name Pijao awakened still alive. To the Calderun mentality they seem like monsters, like animals of uncommon size and power, who drew fire from their armpits.

[Parcialidad of Calderas]

/291 cont./

773 They are in fact legendary personages who go beyond the
186 boundaries of legend to enter the territory of myth, not only
628 by their symbolism, but in their dramatic force, their sociological framework, and their cultural function.

The mythology gravitates around the behavior of the natives, their attitudes toward the whites, the organization of the cabildo, illnesses, and death. Of Juan Chiracol, a 23-year-old informant says: "He warns when the mob is coming, he no longer warns, so." And of Thunder, it is said that he almost killed a padre because he went to the montaña to get wood to board up the school. "Thunder was defending the
538 wood," they say. The tales were always told around the fire,
773 with men, women, and children present, who sometimes laughed, at other times kept silent, but always corroborated, corrected, elaborated, or confirmed. The storytellers sometimes put on a serious face, accompanied their tale with mimicry, and once in a while they would burst into mocking laughter, as if to signify that what they were saying was worthless and they did not believe it. I was soon able to ascertain
115 their sociological and cultural value. The myths and tales
773 were collected with the help of an interpreter, a mestizo from San Andrés, about 35 /292/ years old, tall, muscular, quiet in manner, intelligent, calculating, with great charm and a knowledge of Paez and the Spanish language; he was familiar with the customs of the Calderunos, esteemed by them, and
773 skilled in his questioning. We present below the myths and
128 tales collected, leaving the other aspects of the culture for presentation in a complete monograph.

1. Thunder

*539 The old people related that at one time the area was full of Pijao. Thunder lived in Sukafi. In view of the growing number of Pijao, he decided to kill them. He stood on a tall stone that is to be found there, threw his lariat /boleadora/

4:Bernal Villa--15 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

/188 cont./
462 from the plantings; she will laboriously make the multicolored
594 kuetand yahas which she will give as tokens of love to her hus-
[25] band. The children, who "are a blessing of God," will come and help the man work the land or lighten the woman's kitchen chores.

594 The household lends individuality, a sociological frame-
183 work, status, and function to the family. Land, a house, and a family are specific ambitions of the Paez people. Possibly they represent their most cherished ideals in life.

IV

Live Ritual Fire

372 In the mind of every individual, and in the spirit of the family, fire is a symbol, a symbol of the house and of the home. A house without fire is a dead, abandoned house.

372 In ancient times, when the Pijao went about spreading
773 terror and death, when the caciques came down on the /189/ /illustration appears here/ roaring waters of the great rivers beneath the imposing dark night sprinkled with stars, and even much earlier, the Indians began their daily round by requesting fire from an old, white-haired woman. This fire died out when night spread its dark cloak over the world. Only the old woman's fire was immortal. The monotony of this daily request for fire was transmuted into anguish when the wicked old woman decided to leave and take the fire with her in a piece of wood. They all ran after her, seized the firebrand, and obtained fire from it for all the Indian households. This fire could be preserved.

Thus run the mythical accounts of the origin of fire. They reflect its importance. The manner in which it is preserved, the care which is exercised so that a fire is always /190/ burning in the house, seem to be superstitious attitudes from an ancient

/190 cont./

372 cult of fire. In times past, fire was obtained with "steel and
773 tinder." Whatever the case may be, the mythical accounts

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372 disclose the usury of the owner of fire and anxiety when they were
773 on the verge of losing it. Nowadays, when through carelessness
[777] it goes out in a household, the matches of the whites are used to revive it.

513 The Indians go to bed early. At seven o'clock at night the
512 parents and the children lie down in a common bed on the dry hides of cattle, keeping on their bodies the clothes that covered

/190 cont./

609 It was necessary for someone to tell them that they were sent by
797 /191/ Laureano Gómez before they all said: "Well, then, let
871
829 them remain."

666 In spite of their stubborn conservatism, the leaders of the
829 municipio cannot manage to make them vote for their chosen candidates unless they first get their ration of meat, chicha, and aguardiente. The ration and the vote form an indivisible unit.

829 "I am godo /Goth, pejorative for Spaniard/ to the marrow, a true conservative," exclaimed one of the important men of
[773] Calderas while he was drunk. "Juan Chiracol also was a conservative," said another.

829 The Indians of Tierradentro have been liberals since 1860,
175 thanks to the victor's aura gained by Mosquera on the plains
648 of Segovia. "The battle of Segovia" --says the padre David González-- "in which the Indians took part and in which Mosquera encouraged the native ferocity, and the march on Bogotá, which fell to the rebel general, made him a demigod
[464] in the eyes of the Paez. Since the first days of the colony they have venerated the name Mosquera; the Marquis don Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa had been their master, their encomendero, he had taken them to Popayán in gangs to work on his haciendas, he had given to them the huge lands of his
[665] encomienda... Naturally the Indians of Tierradentro have been strongly bound since 1860 to the political faction which represented Mosquera, liberalism. In the armed struggles which later scourged the nation, the Paez staunchly bore the liberal standard."

829 In view of this, the political affiliation of the Calderas
665 Indians is an odd one; up to less than a decade ago, they formed a conservative island in the midst of a liberal majority. Possibly this attitude conceals a great desire to defend their lands. The Calderas people have no marked sympathy for the neighboring parcialidades. "They are Reds," say the natives,

/233 cont./

75 783 7. The curer toasts Thunder with the chicha, sprinkling it in the air.

8. The curer washes the patient with a calabash of remedies. He fills up completely the hole that contains the "dirt," sprinkles the remaining aguardiente, and ends the cleansing with some final advice. It is 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning.

All treatment of illness is carried out with this cleansing procedure. That is to say, when the impurity (ptans) has been removed from the body, the health of the patient is restored. The curer combats the ptans. In a sense, the cleansing is a hard fight in which the curer is engaged.

756 755 The tama. The tama is a chonta staff about 40 centimeters long and indispensable for every cure.

While in other cultures the medicine man uses the maraca as an indispensable accessory in the art of curing, viewing it as having a mythical origin and thus a sacred character and magical properties, and while, according to Roth, certain piai of the Guianas use wooden dolls in their conjurations (6), among the Paez this little staff called tama

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6. Métraux, Alfred. Le Shamanisme Chez les Indiens de l'Amerique du Sud Tropicale /Shamanism among the Indians of Tropical South America/." -- Acta Americana, Vol. II, No. 3, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1944, pp. 217-218.

755 756 532 552 is used. In Santa Rosa, a curer-sorceress uses in her treatments a wooden dolly dressed like the people, received, according to the informant, from Thunder himself, and called "Soft wind of Thunder."

[773] According to all the evidence, this name is derived from that mythical personage, more precisely that culture hero,

* /233 cont./

756 called Juan Tama, who enjoys the fame of having been the
[755] founder of pueblos, a victorious warrior, a good leader,
[532] legislator, and famed curer.

[552] The tama is a defensive and offensive weapon of a sacred
[773] character /234/ and used exclusively by the curers; it protects
[751] from the attacks of the ptans and wards them off. It is a gift
[787] from Thunder and his badge. In visions, it is the first thing
[428] that he shows. When the curer dies, it may be inherited by a young curer, but generally it is left near the cemetery.

*756 A curer from Calderas, possibly the one most imbued with
539 his mission to defend the health of the people, states that the tama was left from a deed performed by the Virgin in defense of her children. On a certain occasion the sea was rising implacably over the surface of the earth, putting the lives of men in grave danger. The Virgin took pity on them, brought out the tama, and made the motions now made by the curer. The waters retreated. She left this staff for the man who became a curer. This was the origin of the tama.

Another curer from the Parcialidad of San Andrés gave us the following account concerning the origin of the tama:

"The elders say that the tama was left by Thunder himself. A man had a potato field and a rancho in the montaña. He went to harvest it with his son. One afternoon the boy refused to accompany his father, preferring to remain in the rancho. On the following day he disappeared without leaving a trace anywhere. All the steps taken by the father to locate his whereabouts were unsuccessful. On the eighth day, the boy reappeared in the rancho. The father naturally inquired as to his whereabouts and his activities. He replied that he had gone to the señor papa, who had given him the stick he carried in his hands, called tama, and aguardiente and remedies. The aguardiente was cold water from a lagoon, and the remedies were in a pouch. No sooner had he finished his tale than he fell into a deathlike trance. On the fifteenth day, at death's door, he asked his father to hand him the tama, for the señor

7:Hemández de Alba E-5,4 (no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex

Castillo mentions that they wor-
shiped the sun, in whose honor they met and danced in places called "Itaquí-finó," i. e., the place where the sun revealed its mysteries; and that they venerated a kind of culture hero called Guequisu. It was he who instructed shamans (mohanes).

This hero has a counterpart in the religious legend of Juan Tama, the Son of the Star. One day when the Morning Star shone very brightly, some Indians found a child in a gorge—ever since called the Gorge of the Star. This was Juan Tama. They picked him up and entrusted him to a woman to nurse, but he nursed so much that her milk dried up. He was given to another woman, whom he also made very weak. They then said that he could not be nursed by a woman, and gave him food. After he grew up, he married the female chief of Huila, Doña María Mendiguagua, and became chief of all the Indians. He instructed people and explained to them how to keep the land for themselves and not mix with White people. He pronounced them invincible and summoned a chief from Pitayó, called Calambás, whom he appointed his manager. Calambás rebelled,[13] but was defeated by Juan Tama, who pardoned him on account of his bravery, and conferred on him and his heirs the right to rule the *Páez* in Bitoncó. As death approached, Juan Tama went to the lake on the páramo of Moras and sank into the waters. He had come out of this place and returned to it, leaving no heirs.[14]

In the neighborhood of Bitoncó there is a rock with what appears to be human footprints. When the Indians pass it, they uncover their heads and say, "The Holy One came this way." Another remnant of the cult of Juan Tama is the custom that each member of the council spends one week at the shores of the lake before the end of his term to render an account to Juan Tama of his actions in office. Likewise, newly elected officers, as soon as they receive their staffs or insignia of authority, spend a week at the lake. They toss silver coins into it, wash their staffs, and pray for strength to rule well. This ceremony, performed with the greatest secrecy, is called the "curing of the staffs." Recently, however, the Indians have stopped "curing" their staffs in the lake, for they say that Juan Tama is angry, and whenever they approach the lake, it rains and storms badly.

In the Guanacas section there was another sacred lagoon, called Tumbachí, which was recently drained because a snake that lived there attracted girls and kept them for a whole year, and then returned them when they were about to become mothers.

These tribes believed that the soul comes back to life.

Witchcraft was strongly developed among these Indians, who still believe in most of its practices, in spite of the catechization forced upon them by the missionaries.

[13] During the War of Independence, as well as in subsequent revolutions, the Indians of the family named Calambás distinguished themselves as warriors.

[14] We are indebted to Father David González for this legend, told to him by an old Indian in Lame.